# WHAT THE WORLD OWES TO THE PHARISEES

BY

R. TRAVERS HERFORD, B.A.

WITH A FOREWORD BY
LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR JOHN MONASH,
G.C.M.G., K.C.B., D.C.L.

AND AN AFTERWORD BY
CAPTAIN HERBERT M. ADLER, LL.M., M.B.E.

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*As for the wise, their body alone perishes in this world* – Rashi

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Being The Second "Arthur Davis Memorial Lecture" delivered before the Jewish Historical Society at University College on Sunday, April/Nisan 6, 1919/5679

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## NOTE

THE Arthur Davis Memorial Lecture was founded in 1917, under the auspices of the Jewish Historical Society of England, by his collaborators in the translation of "The Service of the Synagogue," with the object of fostering Hebraic thought and learning in honour of an unworldly scholar. The Lecture is to be given annually in the anniversary week of his death, and the lectureship is to be open to men or women of any race or creed, who are to have absolute liberty in the treatment of their subject.



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# FOREWORD

I DESIRE to offer my sincere thanks to the Jewish Historical Society for the honour they have done me in inviting me to preside at this meeting. I am fully conscious of my inability to do adequate justice to the task which has thus been imposed upon me. For nearly five years I have been removed from a literary and philosophic environment, and you may well believe that after an intense concentration upon war during so long a period—and it means a great deal of concentration—one can succeed in forgetting a great deal of other human interests. It is, however, now my duty to say a few words by way of introduction to the occasion which has brought us together, to the lecturer who is to address us, and to the subject with which he will deal.

This present series of lectures, which is devoted to the fostering of Jewish learning, has been inaugurated in order to commemorate

the life and work of Arthur Davis. He was a profound student, a professional scholar, and a great interpreter of Hebrew literature. His literary work in promoting the great version of "The Service of the Synagogue" and his treatise on "Hebrew Accents," are well known. I had not the advantage of personally knowing him, but I can form a conception of his fine qualities and of his modest self-sacrificing personality by the universal respect in which his memory is held.

It was a fine thought to commemorate such a man by such a series of lectures, and it is a credit to this Society that it has taken up the responsibility of organizing and continuing them. It is a homage to the learning of Arthur Davis—a learning of a kind which helps to keep alive the influence of Jewish thought upon our social evolution.

The first lecture delivered last year was by Mr. Israel Zangwill on "Chosen Peoples," which I have had the privilege of reading and which is a fine study of a profound problem appropriate to the stirring times in which we live and to the great issues now uppermost in men's minds.

You are aware that the lecturer is, by the conditions of the Trust, chosen without

regard to creed or school of thought, and that the discussion of all that is presented is quite unrestricted.

To-day we welcome here the second Arthur Davis lecturer, the Rev. R. Travers Herford, whom it is my privilege formally to introduce to you.

I say that I do so formally because he is too well known to most of you to need any real introduction. His works and writings have already made him familiar. He has written on "Christianity in the Talmud," "Pharisaism," and "The Sayings of the Jewish Fathers," and these writings have made him well known to students of literature, and particularly Jewish literature. He is also known to many searchers after knowledge as the courteous and ever helpful head of the Williams Library in Gordon Square.

Mr. Herford has written much on Pharisaism, once a much abused system; and he has shown, by profound research among its own literature, that there is, after all, much value in it. To many people the term Pharisee is synonymous with that of Hypocrite, but the truth seems to be that in those theological writings which assail them, the real purpose was to assail only those of them who were

thought to be hypocrites, and not to assail their system of thought and philosophy as such. Indeed, there is no school of thought which has not hypocrites among those who profess it.

Mr. Herford's subject for to-day is "What the World owes to the Pharisees." We are already assured, at his hands, of a learned treatment of such an attractive theme, and on your behalf I welcome him to this meeting, and shall now invite him to favour us with the presentation of his lecture.

# What the World owes to the Pharisees

WHEN the invitation was given to me to deliver the second Memorial Lecture on the Arthur Davis foundation, I accepted it with a readiness which might well have been tempered with more of modest self-restraint and a humbler sense of my insufficiency for the task offered to me. But I felt and feel deeply the honour implied in the invitation; and if those who gave it had so much confidence in me that they were willing to ask me, who am not a Jew, to undertake this task, I could but reply that I would to the best of my ability justify their confidence.

I can truly say that the task is a formidable one, so much so that I should have declined it if there were not strong inducements urging me to go forward. The difficulties are obvious; not least among them being that I have to

follow the lead of the distinguished man of letters who gave the first of these memorial lectures a year ago; and I ask myself in the words of Koheleth: "What can the man do who cometh after the King?" I cannot compete with him on the field which he has so brilliantly made his own; and indeed, even if I were able, I would not enter upon such a rivalry. But I follow his lead in seeking to serve with entire loyalty the cause for which these lectures were established, and in doing honour to the memory of the man by whose name they are called. It was not my privilege to know him; and it would be in some sort an impertinence for me to recite his praises, or to discourse to you of his excellences. In your memory these are treasured, and I stand outside that sanctuary, not further intruding therein than to join in the prayer that "the righteous may be had in everlasting remembrance." To his memory, and to the cause of the promotion of religious truth which he served in his lifetime, I dedicate the lecture which it is my present duty to deliver.

I mentioned a moment ago the strong inducements which urged me to undertake the offered task, in spite of its difficulties. Not

the least of those inducements was the thought that here was an opportunity for another attempt to make a breach in the barrier of misjudgment and ignorance which still shuts out those who hold the principles of the Pharisees from their due recognition at the hands of Christians. No one will say that there is not still great need for such an attempt, and least of all you, who in various degrees suffer under that misjudgment. And if I, not being of the community of Israel but having learned, I hope, much from its greatest teachers and from none more than the Pharisees, tell what I have learned, there is at least the chance that in this case the words of an outsider may carry weight where those of the home-born might be set down to mere natural desire to exalt his own people. For this reason I ask your indulgence if I say things which are familiar to you, on which indeed many of you could speak with far more authority than I can. Yet it is not these whom I fear, for, if I may quote a German poet (though the German language is not in good odour just now),

> Vor den Wissenden sich stellen
> Sicher ist's in allen Fällen.

Wherefore I will take my courage in both hands and get to work.

I have called the subject of my lecture "What the World owes to the Pharisees." I am indebted for the form of that title to my friend, Dr. Israel Abrahams. It expresses exactly what I had in my mind, but expresses it with much more clearness and point than the title I had thought of at first. It carries with it a kind of challenge, it invites attention, and though it does not invite, it suggests contradiction. For there are many who are not aware that the world owes anything at all to the Pharisees, and who would be very slow to admit the possibility of such a debt. Have not the Pharisees been described once and for all in words which still burn and sting after nineteen centuries? How should such as they have served the good of the world in any smallest particular? Even a man so widely read as Harnack, from whom better things might have been expected, committed himself to the extraordinary statement that Pharisaism had fulfilled its mission to the world when it produced the apostle Paul ("Hist. of Dogma," E.T. i. p. 94). For sheer perverseness and entire misreading of the facts of the case, Harnack's dictum

would be hard to parallel. No doubt he thought he had satisfactorily disposed of the case by that neat epigram.

That the real truth of the matter is widely different it will be my endeavour to show; and if I spoke at the outset of difficulties to be faced, they did not include the presentation of what to me is the very clear and undeniable truth, that the world's debt to the Pharisees is large and important. I shall not need, and I shall not attempt, to make extravagant claims on behalf of the Pharisees, as I might be inclined to do if the case were weaker than it is; and, although I have been told (and I own the truth of the remark), that I have always a soft place in my heart wherever the Pharisees are concerned, yet the simple truth about them so far as I have learned it, will serve them better, and the cause of truth better, than any flattery.

The question then is, "What does the world owe to the Pharisees?" And I would ask you to observe that this is not the same as "What does Christianity owe to them?" It might prove to be the case that Christianity owed nothing to them, had learned nothing from them, was in no way the better for their age-long presence in the midst of

Christians, while yet it might still be true that that continued presence had resulted in much benefit to the world at large, even that part of it where Christians are in the majority. If this be so, and I shall try to show that it is so, then indirectly Christianity also has benefited from the presence and influence of Pharisaism.

The order which I shall follow in working out my case will be that of proceeding from the well known to the less known, from an initial fact which admits of no dispute to what I hold to have been the originating cause and explanation of that fact. This is the reverse of the historical order, which would be to start with the Pharisees and show what has come from their teaching and in what way they played their part in history. But if I took that line I should lay myself open at the outset to criticism and objection before I could get to the stage where I could show how Pharisaism really explains what has to be explained.

I shall therefore begin by considering the plain fact of the presence of Judaism as a living religion at the present day, after an unbroken continuous existence through all the centuries of the common era. In the second

place I shall try to show what it was which enabled Judaism thus to persist, in face of all the assertions that it ought to have died out, and the still bolder assertions that it did die out, when Christianity rose into prominence. The answer to that question I shall find in the principles of Pharisaism; and this will lead me in the third place to consider what special element, what characteristic feature of Pharisaism contained the "promise and potency" of that marvellous vitality, made it able to ensure the continued existence of Judaism with the results which we see. A few concluding words will serve to drive home the final result.

## I

FIRST then consider the fact that Judaism is a living religion, now at the end of nearly nineteen centuries from the time at which it is said to have received its death blow; or, if not its death blow, at least its notice to quit, the time when its claims to any right of survival were denied, the time when in the opinion of its rivals it ought to have died, and did not.

Christian writers who have made such assertions have not been consistent. If they really believed that Judaism had died out, had at least withered into a barren faith, as Canon Charles puts it, they would have let it alone. Why spend time and learning in assailing a dead enemy? If Judaism were dead, why had Christianity anything to fear? If anything must be said about the Jews, why not write disquisitions about the long forgotten Jewish religion, as scholars now write about the religion of the Babylonians or Egyptians of far antiquity? But Judaism

was not dead, or anything like dead; and Christian writers wrote as they did, partly at all events, from a keen sense of the mischief which they thought Jewish controversialists might do to the Christian religion.

Then, if Judaism were not dead, the Jews according to Christian writers were besotted in ignorance, afflicted with "blindness and hardness of heart, and contempt of God's word and commandment," as interpreted, of course, on Christian lines. If so, then why spend time in confuting them, or, what was certainly easier, in reviling them? Why not leave them to the neglect and silent contempt which according to this theory was all they deserved? Why pay attention to the words of men who were only blind leaders of the blind, from whom all the light of truth had been taken away, and who could only mumble the dry bones of a dead tradition, instead of gratefully partaking of the bread of life? Again the answer is that Christian writers knew well that they could not so dispose of the Jewish religion or the people who professed it and lived by it. And Christian writers, with more zeal than consistency, recognized the vitality of Judaism by efforts to convert the Jews. Strange indeed were

the methods they adopted for this purpose, papal decrees, persecutions, *autos da fé*, public disputations, civil disabilities, and so on through the list of efforts of perverted statesmanship, which would be grotesque if it were not shameful. But the meaning of it all, or part of the meaning, was that Christianity owned with anger, fear and indignation and a certain perplexity, that Judaism was not dead nor likely to die, and that its continued presence in the midst of Christian society was a most unwelcome but most undeniable fact.

Moreover, even those Christian scholars who combined the usual scurrility of invective against the Jews with a not usual knowledge of what the Jewish writings contained, admitted in unguarded moments that there was something in those writings besides puerile fables and detestable blasphemies. Wagenseil expresses the wish that, by the labours of well-trained scholars, the nobler portions of the Rabbinical literature may be saved for Christian use (Pref. to "Tela Ignea Satanae," p. 99). And no one could write more venomously against the Jews than Wagenseil, except it were Eisenmenger.

The assertion then that Judaism came to an end with the rise of Christianity into

power and prominence, is an assertion which even those who made it never really believed to be true. But, so far as I know, Christian writers who attacked and denounced Judaism nowhere set forth clearly the real ground of the hostility which they felt. They were never tired of accusing the Jews of blasphemy, on the ground that Jewish writings contained passages insulting to the founder of the Christian religion and impugning the chief doctrines of the Church which claimed his authority. Also, on the ground that the Jewish people in the time of Jesus had been guilty of his death; and as that act could never be undone, so the guilt of it remained from age to age. These were grounds sufficient when urged by a Church which to this day has not learned what toleration means, to afford a pretext for unremitting hostility to the Jews, the branding of them as enemies of the human race. There was Christian warrant for this in the words of the Fourth Gospel, where Jesus is represented as saying to the Jews: "Ye are of your father the devil" (John viii. 44).

To the theological grounds were added the social grounds, based on the fact that the Jews were a race apart, and forgetful of the

fact that it was partly Christian jealousy which kept them out of the general stream of social and commercial and industrial life, and forced them into callings which Christians could safely denounce but could not dispense with. All these things are writ large over the history of Christian dealings with Jews, through all the centuries even down to our own. But they are rather the outcome of a deep-seated feeling than the reason of that feeling. For the feeling itself and the explanation of it, we must look to the theory of the medieval Church. This theory was that God had appointed His Church to be the sole means of salvation for all mankind—"*nulla salus extra ecclesiam*"—that as a society it was one and indivisible, allowing no divergence from its teaching, no difference of opinion as to its declared truths, no questioning of its authority. In regard to countries beyond its control the Church could only assert its claim, and endeavour to make it good through the labours of its missionaries for the conversion of heathens and infidels. But in regard to Christian countries, i.e. countries where both rulers and peoples recognized the authority of the Church, the presence of the Jewish people and the per-

sistence of the Jewish religion were a continual offence because they gave the lie to the Church's boast of unity, they made a steadfast protest against her claim to sovereign authority in matters of religion, they maintained a stubborn refusal to conform to her requirements, or rather her imperious demands. She had her ways of dealing with heretics, and employed them freely against the Jews. But though she counted her victims by thousands, she could not deal in that manner with a whole nation, scattered as it was over so many different lands. If she could have made an end of them, she probably would. But failing in that, she felt as an injury to her authority the uncompromising nonconformity of the Jews as a people; and she failed, century after century, to break down that resistance, compel those obdurate dissenters to conform.

It might have been expected that with the rise of Protestantism, which was a revolt from and rejection of the authority of the Catholic Church, some better understanding of the Jewish position would have been learned, even some sympathy felt towards them, by those who had at last brought themselves to do what the Jews had done from the begin-

ning. But it was not so, and for this reason that Protestants, no less than Catholics, claimed to be the true expounders of Christianity, and the Jews were a witness against them both. The Protestants could not, indeed, make the same pretensions to undivided unity which the Catholic Church made, but the Protestants had a new grievance of their own. If the Jews had refused to admit the authority of the Church, they no less stubbornly refused to accept the Protestant interpretation of the Bible. And no Protestant ingenuity could get over the awkward fact that the Hebrew scriptures formed an integral part of what Christians regard as the whole Bible, and that after all the Jews had the right of the original possessors to say what their own Scriptures meant. It suited Christians to claim that the Old Testament as well as the New belonged to them, that they were the true Israel and so forth. But they never forgot that the Israel living in their midst denied their claim, and disputed their interpretation. When the idea of toleration did come into Christian minds, it did so amongst Protestants certainly; but it was a long time in coming, and the Jews were the last to benefit by it. I do not forget

that Holland afforded in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a refuge for Jews, hunted from other countries; but theological hatred assailed them there, for Holland also was a Christian country. And the golden age for Judaism in Christian times, was when the Jews flourished in Spain, under the protection not of Christian but of Mohammedan kings, who in this respect as in others were wiser than those who claimed to be the children of light.

So it was, therefore, that in the eyes alike of Protestants and of Catholics the presence of the Jewish people and the continuance of the Jewish religion was a standing offence because it was a persistent nonconformity, in times when nonconformity was regarded as a device of Satan.

The mere fact of nonconformity would still have been an offence, if it had been in regard to some trivial matter; but in the case of Judaism it concerned fundamental articles of Christian belief. The witness of the Jew has always been for unqualified monotheism, the Unity of God in the most complete and unconditional sense of the term. The monotheism of the orthodox Christian has always been a qualified monotheism. I know, as a

Unitarian no less than a Jew is not likely to forget, that orthodox Christians always maintain that they hold to the strict unity of God. But when they proceed to teach that the one God is to be worshipped in three Persons (whatever that may mean), there is no getting away from the fact that such monotheism is very much qualified. It might even be truer to call it *dis*qualified monotheism. Whether the doctrine itself be true or false, a simple statement of divine reality as some hold it, or a curiously clumsy and roundabout way of stating what is meant, as others think, the blunt refusal of Judaism to make any terms with the doctrine of the Trinity has always touched orthodox Christians on a sore point, and doubtless will continue to do so as long as orthodox Christianity continues to cling to that peculiar product of Greek speculation. To uphold pure and undiluted monotheism has been a part, and no small part, of the witness borne by Judaism through the centuries; and who will say that there is not still need for that witness to be borne?

Possibly orthodox Christianity would say that; would deny that any good has come or ever will come from that persistent refusal to own the truth as she deems it. But

orthodox Christianity might with advantage learn something in this connection from her own history, and consider two facts; first, that her founder and his first apostles were Jews, and that the Hebrew Scriptures were in the beginning the only sacred writings she had; and second, that a great deal of what is most characteristic in her theology was introduced from heathen sources, using the word heathen in no disparaging sense. The Christian teachers, if they did not consciously borrow from the mystery religions, were certainly influenced by them, and owed much to Greek philosophy and other Gentile influences. This may have been a good thing or it may not; as to that I say nothing. The fact can hardly be denied, and it serves to point the question, what would Christianity have become if it had not had the restraining influence of its Jewish origin and its Jewish Scriptures to keep within bounds its tendency to adopt foreign accretions?

It is conceivable that Christianity should have cut itself entirely loose from its Jewish connection; and who can tell, in that case, to what lengths it might have gone, in its readiness to assimilate what other religions had to offer? From any such fate the

Christian Church has been saved, perhaps without her knowledge, perhaps against her will, certainly with little or no recognition of the fact, by her adoption of the Hebrew Scriptures as part of her own sacred books, and by the persistent reminder of Judaism that there was another side to the questions which she would fain have closed. The Hebrew Scriptures, as I have said on another occasion, have acted like salt to keep the Christian teaching from corruption; and the witness of Judaism has been a constant reminder that that salt has not lost its savour.

If these things are true, then the Church might well be grateful for what Judaism by its persistent witness has done for her. Perhaps that is too much to expect, as yet. But looking at the matter not now from the point of view of its bearing on Christianity, but in relation to the world at large, can it be doubted that it has been and is a substantial benefit to the human race that there should be, amongst its members, and especially its Christian members, this nonconformist nation, to represent liberty of thought, freedom of conscience, independence of judgment, the right of the human mind to settle for itself its relation with God? Uniformity may be

the dream of the Catholic, but it is not the pattern and standard for mankind. And they who were branded by the Roman writer as the enemies of the human race, have wrought for it through the centuries a priceless benefit.

That I take to be the substantial meaning of the persistence of Judaism; and that, if there were nothing else, would be enough to establish the first part of my case.

But there is more, by way of detailed service rendered by Judaism to the larger interests of mankind in general, and of Christianity in particular, and service which could not have been rendered if Judaism had not retained its vigour and vitality as a religion for men to live by and to die by.

Who was it, if not the Jews, working along with the Arabian philosophers, who kept the lamp of knowledge alight in the darkest of the dark ages? Where did the Schoolmen get their Aristotle from except through the translations from the Arabic made by Jews? Until the revival of learning, the thought of Greece was only accessible to the western world through channels which were mainly Jewish. And while this transmission of knowledge was an invaluable gift to the learned in Christian countries, it is at the same time

evidence of the vitality of Judaism. For no dead faith could breed thinkers and scholars such as those who are among the pride and glory of medieval Judaism. It would be easy to recite a list of great names in this connection, philosophers, scientists, poets, as evidence that the Judaism which produced them had vitality enough also to inspire them with noble ideals and lofty thoughts. Yet while it is true that the work of these men was a substantial contribution to the intellectual and moral and religious resources of the human race, I do not feel confident to estimate its effect upon specifically Christian thought.

In one respect, however, the debt of Christianity to Judaism, or rather to definite Jewish teaching, is beyond question. When Protestantism began its battle with the Catholic Church, one necessary consequence was the renewed study of the Scriptures; and for the thorough development of that study, a knowledge of Hebrew was indispensable. So there arose the great Christian Hebraists, beginning with Reuchlin, and including such names as the two Buxtorfs, Surenhusius, and many others. Their fame is great, and well deserved; but how little one hears by comparison

of the men who made it possible for them to acquire such recondite learning! Who provided them with the Hebrew text of the Scriptures? Bomberg, no doubt, and Froben and others. But who set up the text for Bomberg to print, and who corrected his proofs? What of the Jewish grammarians and lexicographers whose works were the unseen and often forgotten foundation upon which Buxtorf and Schoettgen and the rest reared their imposing piles of learning? They could have done nothing if it had not been for Jewish brains and Jewish industry; and Protestant theologians in their controversy with the Catholic Church would have fared much worse than they did, if they had not profited by the labours of Jews; of men moreover whom they were not ashamed to revile even while receiving their help. There is something revolting in the way in which the elder Buxtorf writes of Jews, although he had been admitted to their homes and their confidence for the purpose of studying their manner of life in its minutest detail. Such treachery is without defence; but I am inclined to think it possible that the usual style of scurrilous abuse which defiles the Christian polemics of that age, was partly at

all events, a concession to common practice, and was assumed only because no writer would have gained a hearing for his views unless he was careful to descend to the low level demanded by contemporary practice in matters of controversy. Be this as it may, one thing is certain, viz. that the tone of the great Jewish writers in reference to Christianity was as different from that of their opponents as light from darkness. Criticism and dissent were of course to be found in Jewish writings, but not the execration which filled so many Christian pages. I do not forget the "Toldoth Jeshu"; but that was not the work of a great Jewish writer. And even in regard to the "Toldoth Jeshu," if you read it in one of the two older editions, by Wagenseil and Huldreich, I think you will agree that the Christian notes and comments are more revolting, and show a greater moral depravity, than the Hebrew text.

This has been a slight digression, though indeed it helps the main subject. In general, and by way of summing up the first part of my case, I would say that wherever along the centuries the Jew has made his mark as a thinker, or a statesman, or a soldier, a philosopher, a poet, a scientist, or man of

affairs or what not, the fact that he has done so is to be set down to the credit of the continuous vitality of the Judaism which produced him. And this remains true whatever attitude he himself may have taken up towards his ancestral faith, whether like Maimonides he dwelt among his own people and led them by "the Strong Hand," as "the Guide of the Perplexed," hailed by them as second only to his great namesake of old, or whether like Spinoza he went forth, or was cast forth, and the spiritual home of his fathers knew him no more. Without a living Judaism there would have been no Spinoza; and I leave it to the philosophers to estimate the magnitude of that loss. And behind all the brilliant figures which have appeared upon the stage of history, of men and women of Jewish origin, there is the Judaism which was able to bring them forth; a strong and deep flowing current of faith and religious power, of unquenchable hope and unconquerable perseverance, pursuing its way across the centuries like the Nile amid its sands, unfed by any tributary but trusting to its unfailing source, undeterred by the cataracts of persecution, unwasted by the barren deserts of neglect and scorn.

I trust I have sufficiently considered the fact of the continuous existence of Judaism, so as to show that great and important benefit has resulted from its presence and influence, that the human race in general and Christianity in particular would have been much the poorer if there had not been that presence and influence. If time had allowed, or rather if the subject of this lecture had been the general results of the presence and influence of the Jewish nation in the world, I would have dwelt longer on a theme where there is so much to be said. But I do not forget, though you may perhaps be thinking that I have forgotten, the question to which I am leading up, which is, "What does the world owe to the Pharisees?"

## II

I PASS therefore from the first stage of my argument to the second, which raises the question, What was it which made that continuous existence possible, and enabled Judaism to discharge that thankless labour of beneficence which I have endeavoured briefly to describe? I am confronted at the outset by problems of ethnology with which I am quite incompetent to deal. I shall leave such subjects as "race persistence," "endurance of type," and the like, wholly on one side, while fully acknowledging their importance. But it will not be denied that one element in the case, and an extremely important one, is the Jewish religion. I would go so far as to say it is the most important one. Without that I do not see how there could have been now a recognizable organism which could be truly called the Jewish nation, one which could not merely claim descent from but prove its title to continuity with its far-off ancestry in the Holy

Land. This may be my ignorance, but I am sure that whatever may be the case in regard to other nations, in regard to the unique Jewish nation the factor of religion is all important; and it is with the study of that factor that I am at present concerned.

It is generally admitted that the Judaism which survived the break-up of the Jewish State in 135 C.E. was chiefly of one type; and that wherever it is found in succeeding centuries, Judaism has developed within the lines characteristic of this one type. I speak of development in the succeeding centuries, because I am not so ignorant as to suppose that the Judaism of the later ages was in all points the same as that of the Tannaim. The living stem of Judaism put forth new branches, and new flowers, such as the former ages had not seen. Maimonides left his mark deep and ineffaceable upon Judaism; which is only to say in other words that after his time it was in important respects different from what it had been before. Surely it was different after Jehudah Ha-levi had sung to it, and Ibn Gebirol, and Ibn Ezra and the others of that glorious company; different, as the grey walls of some old castle are different before and after the rising sun has flung

his rays upon them. Judaism was not left unmoved or uninfluenced by the rise of the Qabbala, or by the various pseudo-Messianic movements, or by the appearance of the Karaites in one age and of the Hasidim in another. Judaism since Moses Mendelssohn is very considerably changed from what it was before his time. And so of other influences that have affected it, as might be shown in detail. All this is true, but nevertheless it is also true that the main stem of Judaism preserved its original characteristics, as they were shaped and fixed in the centuries immediately following the great dispersion of the year 135.

The form then given to it, and the principles embodied in that form, are contained in the Talmud, and further illustrated in various ways in the cognate literature. And "Talmudism" is a convenient name by which to designate the Judaism which survived and endured through the ages, even down to the present day. It is an accurate name, if, as I believe is the case, the principles and the authority of the Talmud, or rather of the Talmudic system, were never definitely repudiated, however they might be differently interpreted, at all events until recent times,

and even now not by any means universally. Talmudism, moreover, is a good word for its purpose; but those who use it should first make sure that they know what it means, and how much is implied in it. To contrast Talmudism with the Judaism which existed before it, as if it were a poor dry thing taking the place of the rich, full, flourishing possession of a nobler age, as at the present day is the custom of some, is to show but small comprehension of the Talmud and the ideals of the men who made it, however much learning may be displayed in reference to Apocalypses and the like which Israel, having no use for them, put on one side.

I will defer for the moment the attempt to show what Talmudism really meant, what was the ideal which was enshrined in it, in order to make this point, that it was Talmudism which provided the form in which Judaism did as a matter of fact survive all the dangers of the cruel centuries, perhaps the only form in which it could survive. Talmudism was therefore, if this be true, the direct means by which were secured for the world those various benefits of which I have already reminded you. The Judaism which survived may not be now, may not have

been at any time, wholly and exclusively Talmudism, but without Talmudism, so far as one can see, it would not have been anything at all.

One chief effect of Talmudism was to produce a kind of protective covering for the living spirit within, like the rough bark of the tree which protects the sap, or the hard shell of some otherwise defenceless creature. The discipline of command and prohibition, the dietary laws, the prescribed observances and abstentions which are characteristic of Talmudic Judaism, while they tended to emphasize the separation between Jew and Gentile, at the same time served as a wall of defence within which the Jew could live his own life, and especially his religious life. When Israel was torn away from his own land and his ancestral home, and cast forth to wander through the world, to face its pelting storms of persecution and its bitter winds of scorn, there was need of some protection to enable him to keep the life-blood warm in his veins. The teaching of the Talmud, and the daily and hourly practice of what it enjoined, served him as a mantle, outwardly rough and uncomely so that it would mark him an alien amongst those who were dressed

according to the fashion of the world, but inwardly warm and comfortable, and a thing to be thankful for. The Christian onlooker jeered at the uncouth figure of the Jew, uncouth in his eyes both literally and figuratively, jeered if he did nothing worse; and seldom understood or tried to understand what might be wrapped within that outward garb, to him so repugnant and unseemly. And like the traveller in the fable, the Jew only wrapped himself the more closely in its sheltering folds. Indeed, I should think it likely, though I do not know, that Jews all through the centuries have, intentionally, shown their least attractive side to their Gentile neighbours, so as to keep safe from rude touch and profane curiosity the treasure of their hearts. If it were so, it was right and natural for the Jews; but all the more shame on those whose treatment made them do it.

Be this as it may, without the defensive covering which Talmudism provided it is hard to see how Judaism could have survived, how it could have avoided seeing its treasures of the spirit stripped from it and trampled under the feet of a careless or heartless world, cast like pearls before swine. But keeping

safe those treasures, as he did, the Jew recked not if his Gentile neighbours thought him surly and unsociable or in others ways repellent. If they thought so, let them think so. Israel would hold on his way in spite of them.

That is one aspect of Talmudism, its outward appearance and the protective purpose which it thereby served. In its inward meaning it was very different; and of its inward meaning no Gentile had then, and not many have now, the slightest comprehension.

It is a rash attempt to try and distil the essence of Talmudism so as to exhibit it in a single sentence; but I believe I am not far from the truth when I say that the inner meaning of Talmudism is unshakable trust in God and unreserved obedience to His declared will. This does not exhaust, still less account for, everything in Talmudism, but it lies at the heart of it all, and I believe there is nothing deeper and more vital in it than this. Of the two factors in the definition, the second is more distinctive than the first, though not more important, since both are essential. I mean that unshakable trust in God is an element in other religions; to some extent indeed in all religions, for without it they would perish. And yet I know not where

else to look for such resolute and unfaltering trust in God, maintained by a whole people from generation to generation, as that which has kept alive the hope of Israel in its darkest days. It is not the Psalmist alone, who has had reason to exclaim: "Will then the Lord cast off for ever? Will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail for evermore?" Such a cry must often have escaped from Jewish lips, in all the ages down to our own; but Jewish hearts have never failed to respond to a greater word than that of the Psalmist—"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." If Israel, as I said a while ago, is the stubborn nonconformist among the nations, he is also the unconquerable optimist.

But, to return to the definition I gave of the essence of Talmudism, I find in the second element that which is most distinctive of this type of religion—"unreserved obedience to the declared will of God." The stress here is on the *declared* will of God. That will was declared in the various commandments and prohibitions, contained implicitly or explicitly in the divinely given Torah, either stated there in so many words or deduced thence by methods approved and

deemed legitimate by those who had authority to decide. There is no question but that this is a perfectly definite and consistent theory, and it is not put out of court by the adverse opinion of those who have grown up under some different theory. The position on the lines of the Talmudic theory is quite clear and simple; God has made known to us what He would have us do; we will therefore do it, as exactly and as completely as we can. And the more we can extend the range of His declared will so as to include duties hitherto undefined, so much the more perfect service we shall render to Him. That is a noble ideal, whatever the Gentile may say. It is not the only ideal; but those who follow what they conceive to be a higher one, may well ask themselves if they have been as faithful to their ideal as Israel with his Talmud has been to his? The essence of *his* service was obedience, without question. It was enough that, as he believed, God commanded that he should do *so*; it was not his concern to know *why* God had so commanded him. Sometimes he could discern a reason; more often not, but whether or not, there was the divine command and he would do it, or count himself to have sinned if he did not do it.

And this, while it was a solemn responsibility, was also a joy; and not only that, it was an immense strength to him in times of affliction and trial. For when persecution came down upon him, and the future looked black before him, he could say: "I know not why it has pleased the Eternal so to deal with His people; I know not when or whether brighter times shall come; but here and now, in this darkest hour, is His will to be done, this and that which He has commanded." And many a sore and stricken heart has found relief in the doing of the instant duty, as an immediate reminder of God, the "very present help in trouble."

Such then, if I have rightly apprehended it, was the inmost essence of Talmudic Judaism; that was the central core round which gathered all else which belonged to it. All that found expression in the Haggadah may be said in a sense to have leaned for support upon the strong stem of the Halachah, and without that support would have fallen a confused and tangled heap, to wither and die. But the two together, Halachah and Haggadah, grew and flourished, and all Israel rejoiced in the beauty thereof.

Now Talmudism, whether it were the sys-

tematic development of a noble idea as I have described it, or the dry bones of a dead faith, which it is often thought to be, even by men who ought to know better, Talmudism was beyond dispute the creation of one party alone of those which together made up the Jewish nation at the beginning of the common era. And this party was the Pharisees. Friend and foe alike admit that the Pharisees were the founders of Talmudic Judaism ; and each recognizes to the full that the foundation was worthy of the founders. I leave to any who may stoop to it, the task of pursuing the lower line of the comparison, the deducing of the faults of the Talmud from the vices and defects of the Pharisees. I choose the other line ; and, having shown what I believe to be, nay, what I know to be, the true grandeur of Talmudic Judaism as the development of a noble idea, I proceed to seek for the sources of it in the principles of the Pharisees, and in so doing pass to the third stage of my argument.

## III

IT is, as I have said, admitted on all hands that the Pharisees and no other were the real founders of Talmudic Judaism. The Sadducees did not survive, as a party, the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple. The Essenes lived apart; and, however important in their own eyes and interesting as a type of contemporary Judaism, they do not seem to have had much influence as a class upon the subsequent history of the Jewish people, though it may well be that one or other of the Tannaim owed something to the Essenes. As for the probably very numerous types which made up the rest of the Jewish people, while some would be lost to Judaism, relapsing into indifference or casting in their lot with Christianity, yet it would seem to be the case that the large majority followed the lead of the Pharisees, they indeed being the only teachers left who had something to say, some counsel to give in that desperate hour.

Whether or not the mass of the people became in any technical sense strict Pharisees I do not know. But even in the time of Josephus it was common knowledge that the sympathies of the mass of the people were with the Pharisees, and there is nothing to show or even make it probable, that they thought otherwise in the time of trial.

We have therefore to study the principle, the essence of Pharisaism, in order to see what it was which enabled it to create that Talmudic Judaism for the ultimate benefit, as I have shown, of the world at large. I come here upon ground which of late I have had rather frequent occasion to travel, and I ask your indulgence if I tell but a thrice told tale. My excuse must be that without so doing I could not complete the case I have set out to establish, the proof of the world's debt to the Pharisees. At least, I will take up no time with refutation of the common opinion concerning them. I put all that on one side as irrelevant to the present purpose, and unworthy of any serious attention by those who know. It is of more importance to consider what the Pharisees stood for, and what in fact they accomplished; and those who attach weight to the common charges

against them may reflect whether men who consciously pursued such ideals and realized them so far as they did, are likely to have been as black as they are still painted.

The Pharisees, then, were that element or party in the Jewish nation which survived the downfall of the Temple and the disruption of the State. It was they alone who maintained Judaism in being and handed it on as a living religion to future ages. This is not open to serious question, for there were no others to do it. But it is well to be clear as to what is implied, when we distinguish Pharisees and Sadducees and other types, one from the other. For them all there was as their inheritance from the past, a common ground of religious belief, not indeed expressed in identical doctrines, but a great tradition of allegiance to the one supreme God, enriched by the memories of the past; all the sublime teaching of the ancient Scriptures, not merely held as a tradition but confirmed by the present experience of God-fearing men. There was not one Judaism for the Sadducees and a quite different Judaism for the Pharisees; there was the same for both, only they regarded it from different points of view, and the Pharisees found in it what the Sadducees

did not find. What that was I shall show presently; but the immediate point is this, that when it is said that Judaism survived under the form of Pharisaism, it was the whole of what Judaism contained which thus survived, it was not a mutilated deformed Judaism, bereft (as some think) of its best elements. It was *all there,* as it had been before, only it was held in a form given to it by Pharisaic principles. The stream of Judaism was turned into a Pharisaic channel, but it was the full stream that flowed there. If the Sadducees had survived, the same could have been said of them; namely, that what they had was also Judaism, and that for them it was contained in a form shaped by Sadducean principles. As the Sadducees did not survive, we are not further concerned with them. But the Pharisees did not part company with the Judaism of prophets and psalmists, to set up a new Judaism of the Rabbis. It was precisely the Judaism of prophet and psalmist which they treasured; and if they included the scribe in the list, that was only to add one more factor to the sum of those who had made Judaism the spiritual treasure which held their devout allegiance.

The Pharisees, then, survived and carried on the continuity of Judaism; but why did they survive, and why did the Sadducees fail to survive? The Pharisees survived, in the first instance, because they had developed a type of Judaism which was not dependent on the Temple and its ritual, but had its roots in the Synagogue and the School. The Sadducees failed to survive because their organization depended on the Temple, and when that was destroyed their function was at an end. But that answer in regard to the Pharisees takes us only a little way. How was it that the Pharisees could thus develop their Judaism on lines which were independent of the Temple organization, so that it became capable of being kept safe and carried anywhere, when the time came? The Pharisees were able to do this because they were the only exponents of Judaism who discovered in it the principle of continuous revelation, the open communion with its divine source which alone could keep its springs from running dry.

When Ezra gave the lead, which was followed by the Scribes, and accepted by those who afterwards became the Sadducees and the Pharisees respectively, he did what in his

time was the one thing needful to save the Jewish religion and the Jewish nation from extinction. The lead which he gave was capable of two developments, and in fact it received those two developments. The factor common to both was the Torah, the teaching given to Moses on Sinai, and contained in the five books called after him. On the one hand the Torah tended to become a dead letter, a monument of antiquity, the symbol of a religion which lived on its past and had no present means of communion with the living God. That was the tendency of the Sadducean type of Judaism, and if it had not been arrested, it would have strangled the Jewish religion altogether. On the other hand, and as it would seem, by way of protest and defence against this strangling process, the Torah was exalted as a full, complete, and inexhaustible divine revelation, no mere relic of antiquity but a well of life from which all Israel in all future ages would be able to draw. Not merely the written word but the oral tradition was held to be divinely revealed ; and the same God who taught Moses was there in all succeeding times, to enlighten the minds of those who should study the Torah, and enable them to behold more and more of its sacred meaning.

This conception of the Torah as a full and inexhaustible divine revelation proved to be one of marvellous fertility; and this is the key to the whole system of Pharisaism—a statement which will seem strange only to those whose knowledge of Pharisaism, such as it is, is gained from inspection from without and from a considerable distance. Yet in itself the statement is not only true, but quite natural. For a religion, any religion, only rises to the height of what the human soul is capable of, when it arrives at the conception of a perfect revelation (not necessarily a final revelation), an open communion with God, such that worship and faith and aspiration are not limited by the forms inherited from the past, but are kept fresh by the inspiration of the present. There must be in any such highest type of religion some recognized source of divine revelation. One religion will differ from another in the form under which this idea is conceived and expressed, but the idea must be there. Orthodox Christianity expressed that idea in its conception of Christ. Pharisaism expressed it in its conception of Torah. In form, and in the consequent developments of the idea conditioned by the form, the Christian idea and the

Pharisaic are as widely different and as sharply contrasted as it is possible for them to be. But if Christianity stands on the height reached only by a truly spiritual religion, so also does Pharisaism; and for precisely the same reason. If I may put it so, the fundamental ideas of the spiritual life of the human soul are expressed in Pharisaic language on the one hand and in Christian language on the other; and while it is hardly, if at all, possible to translate from the one language into the other, the subject matter, so to speak, is much the same for both.

I have compressed into a few sentences what would really need a whole lecture to present and establish with the fullness it deserves. If it all seems to some an extravagant paradox, it is nevertheless the deliberate statement of what I have so far learned to be truth in the matter of Pharisaism. The Pharisaic conception of the Torah as the full and perfect revelation given by God to Israel is that which explains, and which alone explains, the subsequent development of Talmudism, and the continuous vitality of Judaism as a religion down to the present day.

This is an interpretation of the meaning of Pharisaism, and is not, so far as I know, stated

explicitly and at length anywhere in the Talmudic literature. But it is not on that account the less true. For it was not the way of the Talmudic teachers to compose treatises of theology or to frame a system of the philosophy of religion. They were concerned with details, and the principles which guided them in handling those details must be gathered from the study of their application to particular cases. As the result of such study as I have been able to make, I hold that the key to the entire Talmudic system is to be found in that conception of the Torah as a full and inexhaustible revelation, which was, if I may put it so, the unique discovery of the Pharisees. It was this alone which enabled them to discern and to preserve what was most vital in the Judaism of their time, and to carry it with them into exile, undiminished and unspoiled, and, if changed at all, only purged of its least valuable elements. Whatever Judaism has been able to do in later ages down to the present time (and how much that was I indicated in the earlier portion of this lecture), there would have been no Judaism to do it unless the Pharisees had enabled it to survive in the great crisis of the nation's fate. And that,

if it stood alone, would have been a priceless service, to be remembered with gratitude by later generations who might have diverged widely from Pharisaic ideas. But it was not alone the act of one supreme crisis; Pharisaism did indeed win that sublime triumph over dire calamity, but Pharisaism itself lived on in the religion which it saved. In the Torah, the inexhaustible revelation, and in the Talmud, the partial expression of what had been revealed, in the Midrash, the fruit of devout meditation upon the sacred teaching, in the daily remembrance of the Eternal Father in their prayers, and the daily doing of His will in the small as well as the great things, the whole life and thought of the Jewish people was laid out upon the lines which the Pharisees had drawn; and if the name ceased to be in general use, that was chiefly because no distinctive name was needed to describe a principle which was common to all.

The later developments of Judaism were not hostile to this principle. The poetry of Jehudah Ha-levi, and his brothers in glorious song, was not indeed in itself a result of Pharisaic principle. It was God's own gift, as it is to every true poet. But Jehudah

Ha-levi was none the less entirely and passionately devoted to the Judaism of the Torah and Talmud. If he had not been, he would not have written the Cuzari. So of Maimonides, so of Bahya and a host of others. They found what they needed within the lines of Talmudic, that is of Pharisaic, Judaism, and their special message was not to controvert but to interpret and illumine it.

Therefore the end of the matter is this, that for the many and varied and substantial benefits which have been wrought for it by the presence and influence of Judaism in its midst during all the centuries of Christian ascendancy, the world is indebted, directly and indirectly, to the Pharisees. Whether those benefits have been recognized or ignored, whether the presence of the Jew has been a constant and unwelcome reminder to Christians that there is another side to questions which they would fain consider to be closed for ever, or whether the help of the Jew has been sought and used and then cast away with no word of thanks, the fact remains that the benefits have been conferred, the good has been done, clearly to be seen by the candid observer of human affairs, though not discerned where prejudice and theological bias

have blinded the sight and clouded the judgment.

I know not what the future may have in store, in these days of anxiety indeed, but of wonderful hope and glorious promise. It may be that Judaism will strike out new lines and find fresh forms in which to enshrine its ideals. Did not Döllinger say that Judaism, torn from its old home, was reserved to be an instrument in the hand of Providence in the distant future? But if there is a Judaism now, able to rise to the height of its great opportunity, able, having done great things for the world, to do even greater, then that will be the fruit of its age-long martyrdom, its steadfast obedience, its undying hope. And what it has been, and what it has done for the service of humanity and the Kingdom of God—*that*, in all its fullness, is "what the world owes to the Pharisees."

## AUTHOR'S NOTE ON THE PHARISAICAL EXALTATION OF THE TORAH

THE view taken in the lecture is based upon J. Z. Lauterbach's theory of the difference between the Sadducees and the Pharisees, set forth in an essay contributed by him to the memorial volume in honour of Kaufmann Kohler, published in 1913. His theory is that the difference between the Sadducees and the Pharisees turned not upon the points usually put forward, immortality, free will, etc., but chiefly upon their respective attitude towards the traditional laws. This difference is indicated in the statement of Josephus (Antiqq. xiii. 10. 6, and elsewhere), that the Pharisees maintained, and the Sadducees denied, the authority of many traditional laws not contained in the Torah of Moses. The Sadducees adhered to a plain literal interpretation of the Torah, on the ground that the Torah was intended for the instruc-

tion of the people, its commands were meant to be obeyed, and the people in the time of Ezra had bound themselves by a solemn oath to obey those commands (Neh. ix. 10). They had not bound themselves to obey any others. If any cases arose for which the Torah did not provide, it became the duty of the priests (as set forth in the Torah itself, Deut. xvii. 8 *sq.*, cf. Hagg. ii. 11) to give directions, not by way of adding to the Torah but merely as ordinances, *gezeroth.*

The *gezeroth* would in course of time become more numerous, and the Torah would to that extent become obsolete, an archaic relic no longer in touch with the religious life of the people. If this process were not arrested, the result would be the complete sterilization of that religious life. It was the Pharisees who arrested that process. They, no less than the Sadducees, accepted with entire loyalty the Torah as Ezra had given it, as the divine teaching imparted to Moses and by him transmitted for the benefit of Israel. But here agreement with the Sadducees ended. For the Pharisees maintained that the Torah was the inheritance of all Israel and not of the priests alone, and that the right of interpreting it belonged to all and any who could

understand it, whether or not he were a priest. They disputed the right of the priests to demand obedience to their *gezeroth*, these being on the Sadducean theory *not* Torah. But they held that whatever was done, or required to be done, must have the authority of the Torah behind it. Therefore the ancient usages, and the traditional teaching given by the priests, were really Torah and not merely *gezeroth*; the traditional teaching was of equal authority with the written teaching, and every tradition could be shown to be implicitly contained in the written Torah if that were rightly interpreted. It was not enough to read the Torah literally, as the Sadducees did, and to say that the literal meaning was the only meaning. For the Torah was not what the Sadducees took it to be, an ancient document of limited contents and ascertained meaning, nor did its authority rest merely upon the oath imposed by Ezra, accepted by the people and regarded as binding by their posterity. Certainly that pledge held good; but the real reason, according to the Pharisaic view, why the Torah had authority was that in itself it was divine, not human; it was the record of a revelation, not a mere text-book of precepts;

it was much more than an ancient document whose meaning could be exhausted and whose words could gradually lose their force, it was a body of divine truth and wisdom, not confined within any human limits of purpose or signification, but able to respond to the inquiry of the devout seeker in any age.

This is the exaltation of the Torah which I have claimed as the unique discovery of the Pharisees. That they in fact took this view of the Torah does not admit of denial, for the whole Talmudic system and the literature which contains and expounds that system, are unintelligible without it. How the Pharisees came by this conception of Torah I do not know, nor who was the first to put it forward. But in Psa. xix. 7–14 and Psa. cxix, it is already declared; and one might even say that Psa. xix contained the first vigorous assertion of the principle of the divine Torah, that its unknown author was the man who first gave to the Pharisees the master-word with which they produced such marvellous results. What it meant was the recovery by them, for their own age and all succeeding ages, of the religious life and vitality of the Jewish people, the possibility of continuous spiritual progress, the deepening

of their religious life. Pharisaism was from the beginning and in all its stages a spiritual religion in the same sense and on the whole to the same degree as that in which Christianity is a spiritual religion; and those who deny this do so because they are unable to interpret the Pharisaic terminology. The formula in which the mathematician expresses the equation to a circle gives to the uninstructed reader no indication of the visible form of the circle; but that which is signified is the same, whether it be shown in a diagram or written in terms of $x$ and $y$, or perceived in the mind. Common criticism of the Pharisees is on a level with the opinion of those who are not mathematicians upon the Calculus.

For fuller treatment of the Pharisaic theory of the Torah, the reader is referred to my book on Pharisaism. What I have said there I stand by; but I hope to be able at some future time to re-write the whole book, and present the case more thoroughly and with the results of subsequent study.

# AFTERWORD

CAPTAIN HERBERT M. ADLER, LL.M., M.B.E., in seconding the vote of thanks to the Chairman proposed by Mr. H. S. Q. Henriques, M.A., B.C.L., President of the Jewish Historical Society, said :—

I have great pleasure in seconding the vote of thanks to Mr. Travers Herford for his erudite lecture. Its subject seems to me to be particularly happily chosen, having regard to the fact that these lectures originate in the work of the late Mr. Arthur Davis on the Jewish Festival Prayer Book. The Prayer Book has its very roots in the spiritual life of the Pharisees. Their impress is strongly marked on its pages. They fashioned its shape and determined its outline. As successors of Ezra they moulded the "Eighteen Blessings" which are the very corner-stone of the liturgy. The theology of the Pharisees may therefore be safely looked for in our

prayers, more safely indeed than in the tomes of the Talmud. As the late Prof. Schechter reminds us,[1] the Prayer Book is in this respect the better guide, for it reflects the collective sentiments of the Synagogue as a whole, rejecting the many individual and sometimes foreign dogmas which have found a place in the Talmud. The opinions there embodied are often coloured and sharpened by ephemeral controversy, while the Liturgy springs spontaneously from the beliefs which found their acceptance in the collective mind of Israel. Religious conceptions naturally emerge more truly from a hymnal than from a Hansard.

If the Prayer Book, then, is referred to as the exponent of the religious ideals of Pharisaism, the error will at once be revealed of that distorted view which for so long caricatured the Pharisee as a pious hypocrite, or at best as a soulless ceremonialist. To take two of the commonest libels upon him: his austerity and his formalism. The Sabbath prayers are an overwhelming proof of the baselessness of these charges. They are dominated by the note of delight. The Sabbath is a bride, a queen, a crown. She is

[1] "Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology," p. 9, *seq.*

the fairy godmother of Israel, that Cinderella whose elder sisters have condemned her to drudgery and contumely all the week. Confession and contrition, prayers for daily bread and the thousand needs of humanity, are reserved for other days. The Sabbath is the free-given bounty of God's love; it is the perfect rest of mind and body; it brings with it an "extra soul." It has come straight from Heaven, and is therefore a foretaste of the world to come. The vast chain of prohibitions which are supposed to constitute the Pharisaical Sabbath will be looked for in vain in the liturgy for that day. The laws as to the bearing of burdens, as to journeys, as to fire and cooking, find no place here—not that they are disregarded, but just because they are accepted, and at their true value. They are mere machinery. It is the spirit which is here glorified. Essentially the Sabbath of the Pharisees was not a thing of negations. As little could it be observed by mere abstentions as a poem can be composed by the avoidance of false quantities.

The liturgy for the Day of Atonement is another example. The bare act of fasting is hardly referred to. There is the scathing denunciation of the false fast from Isaiah

which forms the Haphtarah of the day. There is the poetical petition—

> . . . and all the waste
> Of strength and body spent in this my fast
> Shall seem to Thee a sacrifice complete,

and there is certainly a passage where the abstentions of the day are set out. "For in Thine abundant mercies," it runs, "Thou hast given unto us this Day of Atonement, this day of pardon . . . a day on which eating and drinking are forbidden . . . a day to bestow love and friendship, a day to abandon envy and strife." There is no morbid asceticism here. The Day of Atonement is a "Yom Tob." We say *She-hechiyanu* over it as for a gift; the candles are kindled at its advent as a symbol of the light it brings to heart and home.

Nobody denies that there were bad Pharisees, and doubtless the bad Pharisee was highly objectionable. "Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds." But it was not reserved for others to discover the phenomenon of the man who expects the rewards of Phineas for the deeds of Zimri. There is a well known Braitha[1] which recounts the

[1] "Aboth d' R. Nathan," ed. Schechter, (A)c. 37; (B)c. 45. Sotah 22 b.

different species of Pharisees :—Pharisee Self-seeker, Pharisee Shambler, Pharisee Reckoner (who is always balancing his heavenly pass-book), Pharisee Bent-Back, Pharisee Do-tell-me-another-duty, Pharisee Tremulous, and the only true Pharisee : Pharisee Love-God. Though there were spurious coins in circulation, they were not always accepted at their face value.

I would like to add a personal word concerning the late Mr. Arthur Davis. In my collaboration with him on the Festival Prayer Book, the feature in him that struck me most was his consuming desire for perfect accuracy. He never for a moment lost sight of the high purpose of the work, and a second-best reading or rendering or even accent was "Pasul" in his eyes. He was like that Greek sculptor who bestowed no less pains on fashioning the back of his statue for the temple niche : because it was raised, not in tribute to man, but in honour of the all-seeing Godhead.

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ITALIAN FANTASIES
WITHOUT PREJUDICE
THE WAR FOR THE WORLD

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